

McCormick Citizens Will Try To Elect Somebody Sheriff

McCormick County citizens will go to the polls Dec. 30 for a primary and Feb. 17, 1987, for a special election to name a new sheriff.

But that election is already fraught with controversy.

County Coroner Jack Keown, appointed by Gov. Dick Riley to serve as acting sheriff, has been charged with bribing an opponent to pull out of the race. Riley subsequently appointed yet another acting sheriff, Huey L. "Buck" Cockrell, resident Newberry County agent for the state Law Enforcement Division.

Keown apparently was to remain in the sheriff's race pending grand jury action and disposition of the alleged bribery claims, and he has not been stripped of his duties as coroner.

His opponents in the upcoming election are Don Neal, a retired criminal investigator from Florida, and Deputy



JIMMY GABLE

George Reid, the candidate Keown is accused of bribing.

Former McCormick County Sheriff James Gable is scheduled to report to federal prison by Jan. 5 to begin a six-month sentence for embezzling county money.

Gable was sentenced in U.S. District Court in Aiken on Nov. 22, a little more than a month after a federal jury found him guilty of embezzling U.S. Treasury checks totaling \$4,043.

The checks were written to McCormick County by the U.S. Corps of Engineers for law enforcement services to parts of the Clark Hill Lake area that were under the corps' jurisdiction.

Gable received the six-year sentence for one count of the original indictment against him. On the second count, he was sentenced to three years, suspended on service of five years probation. Maximum possible sentence was 10 years and/or a \$10,000 fine on each count.